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Note verbale dated 7 July 2016 from the Permanent Mission of Fiji to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Fiji to the United Nations has the honour to refer to the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

The Permanent Mission of Fiji has the further honour to inform that the Government of the Republic of Fiji would like to become a member of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In connection with this, the Government of Fiji, on 12 June 1972, acceded to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its Protocol as well as the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons. Refugees arriving in Fiji are duly processed in line with the principles and procedures outlined in these Conventions.

Fiji is on the front line of the consequences of climate change, and in this regard has already offered refuge to citizens of neighbouring States in the Pacific, where loss of territory is likely to occur as a result of climate change. Increasingly severe weather patterns and rising sea levels have seen Fiji become the first country in the Pacific to relocate communities because of climate change. With no existing criteria for small island developing States regarding when to abandon homes and relocate, Fiji is leading the way in the development of relocation guidelines, since the Fiji Government intends to move more affected villages and has offered to resettle other low-lying Pacific nations. Fiji is firmly engaged with the permanent and forced displacement of people owing to climate change, which is one of the emerging and critical issues in the future work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Further, in connection with regional approaches to refugee processing, which will have an impact on Pacific small island developing States and, more broadly, small island developing States, it is proper for the Pacific States to be represented in the Executive Committee.